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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3626
RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2558
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 4545
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 001094

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: APRIL 23 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: Yasukuni Shrine, Dalai Lama, Falun Gong, Chinese Hackers

11. Key points at the April 23 MFA press briefing:

-- A "correct and proper handling" of historic issues is the bedrock of Sino-Japanese relations, and Japan should take appropriate steps to safeguard the relationship following Prime Minister Taro Aso's sending an offering to the Yasukuni Shrine.

-- Falun Gong is an illegal cult that was outlawed ten years ago. People should help those who have been "taken in" by Falun Gong.

-- China opposes and cracks down on cyber-crimes, including hacking. Some people have "made up" stories about Chinese hackers attacking the U.S. Department of Defense. Accusing China unfairly is irresponsible.

-- As a friend to both the ROK and the DPRK, China hopes for the improvement of relations between the two countries.

-- President of the French National Assembly Bernard Accoyer signed a memorandum on increased exchanges between the National People's Congress and French National Assembly, which should further enhance cooperation between the two bodies.

-- China's position regarding the Dalai Lama has been clear: China firmly opposes his separatist activities in any country and under any name.

Yasukuni Shrine

12. A "correct and proper handling" of historic issues is the bedrock of Sino-Japanese relations, MFA spokesperson Jiang Yu said at the April 23 regularly-scheduled MFA press briefing in response to questions on Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso's sending an offering to the Yasukuni Shrine. As such, China urges Japan to take appropriate steps to safeguard the relationship. Asked whether PM Aso's visit to China would be cancelled, Jiang responded that details about Aso's visit will be released shortly. A follow-up question on China's response to the Yasukuni shrine offering was directed to the MFA website.

Falun Gong

13. Asked about reports that Falun Gong practitioners may organize a sit-in and surround the Chinese leadership compound at Zhongnanhai, Jiang responded that addressing Falun Gong activities is a legal issue, because China outlawed the "Falun Gong cult" ten years ago, a measure that demonstrates China's concern for its people, especially those most vulnerable. In response to a question alleging illegal detention, torture and harassment of Falun Gong practitioners, Jiang said that the "Falun Gong cult" controls people's minds, and as such has caused death and disability to many innocent people. Falun Gong was thus outlawed and its leaders punished. People should help those who have been "taken in" by Falun Gong, a posture, Jiang

reiterated, that reflects China's concern for its people, particularly those most vulnerable.

Hacking the DoD

14. Asked about reports that Chinese hackers obtained access to U.S. Department of Defense plans for a fighter jet, the spokesperson responded that China opposes and cracks down on cyber-crimes, including hacking. However, some people have made up stories about Chinese hackers, she said. China has more "netizens" than any other country, but China also faces the threat of hackers, with as many as eight out of ten Chinese computers controlled by hackers and "botnets." The PRC Ministry of Public Security is working with other countries to fight the problem, and accusing China unfairly is irresponsible.

ROK-DPRK Relations

15. Asked about a meeting between representatives of the ROK and the DPRK at the Kaesong Complex, Jiang responded that as a friend to both countries, China hopes for the improvement of relations between the two. Reconciliation will help promote regional stability, and as such, China supports continued dialogue on the basis of mutual equality.

Sino-French Relations

16. President of the French National Assembly Bernard Accoyer is currently visiting China, making this the second visit of a

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President of the National Assembly in 45 years, the spokesperson said. During a meeting with Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress Wu Bangguo, the two signed a memorandum regarding increased exchanges between the National People's Congress and French National Assembly, which should further enhance cooperation between the two bodies. China is ready to have further cooperation with France for the mutual benefit of the two countries. Asked if Chinese President Hu Jintao would accept French President Nicolas Sarkozy's invitation to visit France, Jiang said that no such invitation has been received.

Black Jails

17. Asked if "black jails" exist in China, the spokesperson responded that she did not know the source of such reports but stated that there are no "black jails" in China. China is a country with the rule of law, and all cases are handled in accordance with the law.

The Dalai Lama: Obama, Public Statements

18. Asked about a potential meeting between President Barack Obama and the Dalai Lama, the spokesperson said she had not heard of such plans. However, China's position regarding the "Dalai" has been clear, she said: China firmly opposes his separatist activities in any country and under any name. China has made representations urging the United States not to allow the Dalai Lama to conduct separatist activities on its territory, she said. Asked about the Dalai Lama's statements that the lengthy sentences given to people convicted of arson in conjunction with the May 14th, 2008 riots were politically motivated, Jiang responded that "the Dalai's statements show what kind of person he is." He has told many lies regarding the May 14th incident, she said. Competent authorities have handled the cases in keeping with Chinese law, in public and open trials. The Chinese government safeguarded the dignity and right of representation of the defendants, each of whom had a lawyer or was provided with one. It is clear, Jiang said, that the People's Court has tempered justice with mercy and been prudent in its use of the death penalty.

Rules for Foreign Journalists

¶9. Asked if rules for foreign journalists have changed, as some journalists have reported "problems" in Sichuan province and elsewhere, the spokesperson responded that the rules have not changed. If journalists have problems, they can contact the relevant department in the MFA. She noted that she does not know the specifics of the problems, but that there may be local issues, such as traffic problems near the earthquake zone in Sichuan, which are causing problems for journalists. As such, journalists who wish to visit are encouraged to contact the local government. The Chinese government facilitates the work of foreign journalists in China, and this attitude has not changed, she said.

Fleet Review

¶10. Regarding the fleet review in Qingdao to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of the PLA Navy, the spokesperson directed the questioner to the PLA Navy.

Visit

¶11. At the invitation of Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping, Peruvian First Vice President Luis Giampietri will visit China April 27-May 2, during which time he will meet with Chinese leaders to exchange views on issues of mutual interest and sign a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The FTA is a strategic decision of the two governments, and will further promote trade and investment to help address the current global financial crisis.

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